

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1042 without my signature.

Medical Technical Assistants-Psychiatric (MTA-Ps) serve as members of the treatment teams in psychiatric facilities located within state prisons. To be effective, they must gain the trust of the inmates to whom they are providing treatment services. The use of chemical restraints is counter to the goals of the psychiatric programs and the effort to provide mental health treatment in the least restrictive environment possible. In addition, it has yet to be established that such chemicals are effective and safe for use on mentally ill patients.

For purposes of security, the Salinas Valley and Vacaville Psychiatric Programs have entered into agreements with the prisons to have state correctional officers, who are authorized to carry and use Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) pepper spray under certain conditions, respond to and assist Department of Mental Health staff to defuse and control situations with patients. When necessary, these staff may assume control over the situation for a brief time in order to squelch disturbances and restore order. Therefore, it is not necessary for treatment team members to carry OC pepper spray.

For these reasons I am unable to support this measure.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger